

Terms of Reference for a Consultancy to establish an Agricultural Trade and Market Scorecard for the SADC region

1) INTRODUCTION

The Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA) is a subsidiary organisation of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). With a mandate to coordinate agricultural research and development and contribute towards enhancing food and nutrition security and livelihoods in the region, CCARDESA was established in 2011 and started its full operations in 2013. In the SADC region, climate change and other related factors have significantly affected agricultural productivity, particularly in the smallholder farming sub-sector. As part of the response, CCARDESA received a grant from the World Bank to coordinate the regional implementation of the Food Systems Resilience Programme (FSRP) whose objective is to increase resilience of food systems and preparedness against food insecurity in Southern Africa.

The programme aims to deal with and resolve the underlying structural challenges of food insecurity and reduce beneficiaries' sensitivity to unpredictable climate events, crises, and conflicts. Implementation is organized around the following pillars: Pillar 1 - (Re-)Building Resilient Agricultural Production Capacity; Pillar 2 - Supporting the Sustainable Development of Natural Resources for Resilient Agricultural Landscapes; Pillar 3 - Getting to Market; and Pillar 4 - Promoting a Greater Focus on Food Systems Resilience in National and Regional Policymaking. Under Pillar 3, the project aims, among others, to develop a regional trade and market scorecard to assess implementation of policy commitments on agricultural trade and market access in the region by identifying country-level policy gaps and areas for improvement related to intra-regional agricultural and food trade.

Trade can help expand agribusiness opportunities as well as stabilize food availability and access across the region's markets in a context of increasingly frequent and intense climate related shocks. In that respect, the removal of physical and regulatory barriers to (intra-regional) agricultural trade holds particular promise for ensuring food and nutrition security and food systems resilience, especially under a changing climate. Trade has been found to be effective in influencing the movement of food from surplus to deficit areas in response to localized harvest failures and other supply disruptions in the short-run, and in response to climate-induced shifts in the geography of food production in the long-run. Trade can also lead to a more efficient allocation of resources in agricultural production.

Currently, Southern Africa is characterized by relatively low levels of intra-regional food trade by international standards, with agricultural trade among African countries accounting for less than 20% of the region's agricultural trade. From that starting point, the further integration of agricultural markets, removal of technical barriers to trade, harmonization of trade modalities

(including sanitary and phytosanitary [SPS] standards and controls), and coordination of responses to shocks, under the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) or other initiatives like trade facilitation platforms, could all contribute to building food systems resilience.

2) JUSTIFICATION

The overall objective of the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP) is to contribute to the region's sustainable agricultural growth and socio-economic development. To achieve this, the policy has a total of four specific objectives: (i) To enhance sustainable agricultural production, productivity and competitiveness; (ii) **Improve regional and international trade and access to markets of agricultural products**; (iii) Improve private and public sector engagement and investment in the agricultural value-chains; and (iv) reduce social and economic vulnerability of the region's population in the context of food and nutrition security and the changing economic and climatic environment.

The development of a regional agricultural trade and market scorecard is in line with objective number two of the SADC RAP. Regional trade integration and the promotion of Southern Africa's trade with the rest of the world are central to SADC's agenda as outlined in the SADC Treaty of 1992 and SADC's Protocol on Trade. Key to improved regional and international trade is the creation of a conducive environment for agriculture and food related regional trade by rationalizing trade measures and reducing trade impediments, supporting agricultural producers and traders to access regional and international markets, coordinating and/or harmonizing trade relations with third parties on relevant issues, and assessing and addressing related costs that may affect trade.

Intra-regional trade of food and agricultural products is an increasingly important lever for the resilience of the Southern African food systems. However, trade flows of agri-food commodities are hampered by multiple barriers, including: i) unfavorable business environment, ii) limited implementation of existing policy frameworks, iii) resource and capacity constraints in tracking and monitoring existing trade flows, and iv) lack of sufficient accountability mechanisms. Some of these challenges will be addressed through the proposed trade and market scorecard, enabling SADC Member States to track and monitor progress made in achieving targets set by national, regional, and continental policy commitments.

3) OBJECTIVE

To develop a regional agricultural trade and market scorecard, which will be used to assess the implementation of policy commitments on agricultural trade and market access in the Southern African region by identifying country-level policy gaps and areas for improvement related to intra-regional food and agricultural trade.

4) SCOPE OF WORK

To achieve the project's objective, the following activities will be conducted:

- a) Submission of inception note
 - o The inception report should clearly outline how the firm intends to execute the tasks, including allocation of personnel, as well as use of resources and responsibilities of specific tasks for this assignment. It should also include a roadmap with clear milestones and associated costs. The firm will highlight potential difficulties that may arise during the development process and provide potential mitigation strategies.

- b) Review of available literature aligned with existing policies, agreements and frameworks related to intra-regional agri-food trade and the FSRP to identify potential targets and indicators of the Scorecard.
- c) Ensure timely establishment of a taskforce to facilitate the implementation and coordination of the assignment and provide technical support to CCARDESA
 - (i) The firm will propose a detailed roadmap, including a timeline and responsibilities for the taskforce.
 - (ii) The taskforce needs to include stakeholders from regional organizations, technical partners, private sector and representatives from SADC member states.
 - (iii) Prior to the taskforce establishment, the firm will prepare for a meeting between CCARDESA to discuss its composition and the related selection of country representatives. Key factors for selection include expertise in the field of regional agri-food trade and position within ministries that influence relevant policy decisions.
 - (iv) Provide technical support to CCARDESA, as the leader of the task force establishment, to ensure that the taskforce is set-up respecting the milestones defined in the inception note.
 - (v) The taskforce will need to contribute to outputs produced by the firm.
 - (vi) The task force may be divided in thematic groups depending on technical comparative advantage and interest.
- d) Provide technical support on the preparation of the inception meeting of the taskforce and its operation during the methodology development
 - (i) In close coordination with CCARDESA, the firm will prepare and coordinate the taskforce inception meeting.
 - (ii) During the inception meeting, the firm will clarify the relevant frameworks and policies to which the scorecard indicators will relate. Based on this, the firm will propose the overall objective and potential sub-targets of the Scorecard, which will need to be verified by the taskforce. This will yield a guiding direction to the firm for the methodology development and ensure that the Scorecard reflects the countries' interest.
- e) Coordinate and support the establishment of country teams in SADC Member States
 - (i) To establish viable and effective data collection mechanisms linked to the Scorecard, country teams familiar with the existing policies on agri-food trade and data collection capacities will be established under the joint supervision of CCARDESA and the firm.
 - (ii) The country teams will include a lead-person, representatives from relevant ministries (e.g., Agriculture, Trade, and Finance) and the national statistics office. The firm will propose the composition and operating procedures of the country teams for validation by the taskforce.
- f) Propose the draft of the Scorecard Methodology for deliberation and approval by the taskforce
 - o Based on the review of the above outlined documents and the defined overall objective, the firm will develop the methodology of the Scorecard, including a reasonable number of indicators and the underlying scoring mechanism. This scorecard methodology will include country profiles and the proposal needs to be aligned with the existing policy frameworks related to intra-regional agri-food trade and to support countries in directing them towards potential fields of action. The proposal will need to be validated by the taskforce.

- g) Creation of Scorecard implementation manual, including user-guide for the electronic platform and communication strategy, including a peer learning mechanism
 - (i) The firm will develop technical profiles for each indicator and describe corresponding computing methods (how the indicator is weighed in the final score, whether it consists of sub-indicators, etc).
 - (ii) The firm will develop a technical note on benchmarking methods and scoring mechanism for country comparison.
 - (iii) The firm will propose a communication and promotion strategy for the Scorecard at country-level, namely: i) peer-learning mechanism; ii) ideas how to catalyze stakeholders' action given their scorecard findings; and iii) dissemination roadmap, including a transparent timeline for the roll-out of the scorecard in the region.

- h) Create a user-friendly online platform for different user groups
 - (i) The firm will develop an online platform where identified representatives from the countries can upload data.
 - (ii) To facilitate data entry, the firm will develop an online country performance reporting template to be used for data collection based on the guidance provided in the technical guidelines.
 - (iii) The firm will propose several operating modalities to the taskforce for validation (e.g., on the hosting of the online platform and maintenance responsibilities). This also includes the distribution of user-rights for different user-groups, including administrators who will be responsible for the validation of the country data.
 - (iv) The role of the administrators will be to ensure data quality and correctness of the provided information. The online platform should be designed in a way that it automatically produces country-level scorecards once the entered data have been approved by the administrator.

- i) Test the Scorecard methodology in two countries and summarize the lessons learnt from this exercise
 - o The finalised version of the Scorecard methodology, together with the electronic platform and/or tool, will be tested in two countries. Based on data availability and country interest, the firm will propose two countries to the taskforce for approval and then conduct the pilot application of the Scorecard. A summary of the experiences and lessons-learnt from the methodology testing will be drafted by the firm.

- j) Reporting of the draft final products to CCARDESA
 - o Following completion of # (a) to (i), CCARDESA will organize a meeting to share experiences and lessons-learnt in the context of the Scorecard. For this meeting. During this meeting, the firm will present the tasks related to this assignment and will be available for a Q&A session.

- k) Provide coordination and technical support to CCARDESA to organise a regional validation meeting of the final Scorecard methodology
 - o Following the completion of # (a) to (j), the finalized version of the scorecard methodology, as well as the accompanying materials, will be presented in the context of a regional event to regional agricultural trade and development stakeholders for their approval and final validation.

5) EXPECTED OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

The outputs/deliverables are outlined below and correspond to the steps outlined above. CCARDESA will also facilitate connections to specific private and/or public sector entities within reasonable limits and involve the firm in relevant events. Payments will be made upon receipt of the following deliverables.

Deliverable	Suggested Payment
1. Approved inception report	15%
2. Approved review report on national and regional existing policies, agreements and frameworks related to intra-regional agri-food trade in Southern Africa, identifying potential targets and indicators of the Scorecard	25%
3. Regional Taskforce established and commissioned	10%
4. National Task forces established and commissioned	
5. Approved Scorecard Methodology	20%
6. Approved Scorecard implementation manual and communication strategy	
7. Approved functional requirements for electronic tool/platform	20%
8. Electronic tool / platform ready for user acceptance testing	
9. Training of national and regional task forces on Methodology and use of electronic tool/platform	
10. Approved training report	
11. Regional validation of Scorecard and electronic tool/platform	10%
12. Approved regional validation report	
Total	100%

6) CONSULTANCY APPROACH

The work will involve a combination of desk study, virtual and physical engagements, which will require travelling. The methodology of the Scorecard will be developed in close collaboration with CCARDESA and the SADC Secretariat, SADC Member States and stakeholders from the private sector. An inclusive development process will contribute to country-ownership of the concept. Furthermore, the firm will develop a communication strategy, contributing to awareness raising of the Scorecard concept within SADC.

7) DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The assignment is expected to be completed within a period of seven (7) months.

8) EXPENSES AND LOGISTICS

CCARDESA will facilitate and pay directly to service providers for all the indirect expenses / reimbursables related to the assignment.

9) QUALIFICATIONS AND WORK EXPERIENCE OF THE CONSULTANT

The Firm should have at least 10 years of experience in international agricultural trade, policy dialogue, monitoring and evaluation and capacity building. In addition, have adequate facilities to carry out the assignment, including a strong network within Southern Africa.

Key staff qualifications and experience

a) *Team Leader – Trade Economist*

Education:

PhD in Economics, Development Economics, Agricultural Economics, International Trade, International Relations or a relevant field.

Experience:

- (i) Demonstrable knowledge and understanding of international food and agricultural trade, with particularly reference to Southern Africa;
- (ii) At least 10 years of experience in international trade analytics, preferably in food and agriculture;
- (iii) At least 10 years of experience in developing and supporting scorecards and other metrics in the agricultural sector, preferably agricultural trade;
- (iv) At least 10 years of relevant experience in quantitative economic analysis of agricultural markets and knowledge of quantitative techniques, including simulation modelling;
- (v) Proven ability and experience in project management and leading consultancy teams;
- (vi) Proven ability in organising policy dialogues and producing proceedings reports, technical reports and policy briefs;
- (vii) Have a traceable publication record on reputable platforms on food and agricultural marketing and international trade;
- (viii) Have traceable experience in conducting capacity building on trade policy analysis and monitoring;
- (ix) Experience in trade negotiations will be an advantage.
- (x) Experience in working with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) is highly desirable; and
- (xi) Knowledge of and involvement in programmes supported by regional and international organizations such as the World Bank Group, EU, and AfDB is also desirable.

b) *Trade Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist*

Education:

At least a Master's degree in economics, international trade, statistics or related field

Experience

- (i) At least 7 years of experience in trade facilitation, international trade economics or international development;
- (ii) At least 5 years of experience in the use of a trade and/or market score card and assessment of their use and impact on policy;
- (iii) At least 5 years of experience in quantitative, qualitative, and/or mixed methods research and use of Trade Management Information Systems (MIS);

- (iv) Knowledge of and skills in applied monitoring and evaluation and statistical techniques, including knowledge of a range of monitoring data collection and analysis methods;
- (v) Knowledge of theories of change and logic models and ability to facilitate development of theories of change, indicators, and an indicator reference manual; and
- (vi) At least 5 years of experience working for a regional organisation and supporting donor funded programmes.

c) *Communication and Knowledge Management Specialist*

Education:

At least a Master's degree in information and knowledge management, or communication technology or related field.

Experience

- (i) At least 7 years of experience in communication strategy development and implementation;
- (ii) At least 5 years of experience in knowledge sharing, including e-platforms and designing systems for government, international organizations or NGOs;
- (iii) Knowledge of specialized software in communication and knowledge management, including IT knowledge to establish and maintain databases and tracking system; and
- (iv) At least 5 years of experience working for a regional organisation and supporting donor funded programmes.

10) MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The firm will report to the FSRP Regional Coordinator who will be responsible for daily technical and administrative issues for the assignment.

11) OBLIGATIONS OF THE CLIENT

The Client will provide the following support to the Consultant where necessary:

- a) Relevant documents that will facilitate the Consultant's work;
- b) Contacts of key stakeholders;
- c) Introductory letters to key stakeholders to facilitate communication;
- d) Facilitate review and dissemination meetings with key stakeholders; and
- e) Facilitate liaison with other program implementing partners.

12) OBLIGATIONS OF THE FIRM

The firm is expected to undertake all necessary activities that will ensure the outputs are consistent with the professional and legal requirements. The firm will ensure that all outputs under this assignment are delivered in the three (3) SADC official languages - English, French and Portuguese

13) PROPRIETY RIGHTS OF CLIENT IN REPORTS AND RECORDS

All data, reports, information collected, and reports developed, etc. by the firm during this exercise, shall belong to the Client. No use shall be made of them without prior written authorization from the Client.

At the end of the contract, the firm shall relinquish all data, manuals, reports and information (including the database, codes, and related documentation) to the Client and shall make no use of them in any other assignment without prior written authority from the Client.